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the fact that almost all of the recent writers upon the topic have freed themselves from the uncritical conceptions that Fechner introduced, and agree in the main upon a general end which the establishment of a psychophysics has in view. J. J.

Die Deutung der psychophysischen Gesetze. AD. ELSAS. Philosophische Monatshefte, XXIV, 3 und 4, 1887.

This article forms part of a controversy regarding the fundamental validity and import of the psychophysic law, which has been raging since the appearance of Fechner's first work in this field, and had busied the founder of psychophysics up to the day of his death. It will hardly be feasible to recount here the many and detailed issues which the author takes with Fechner's theories, but a brief notice of their general features is in place, especially as the attack is directed against the most fundamental parts of Fechner's work, and in fact, if accepted, as it promises to be, will be so entirely subversive of much of Fechner's mathematical deductions that Dr. Elsas acknowledges his trepidation in taking so bold a position. Fechner uses mathematical principles, says the author, not as tools, but as a magic wand by which what is not contained in the facts can be brought out of them, neglecting to remember that mathematical aids can only simplify and arrange what is implicit in the facts as ordinarily stated. Fechner passes from Weber's law, which simply states the dependence of the perceptibility of a difference between sensations upon the ratio of the stimuli that gave rise to them, to the logarithmic form of the law by aid of a comprehensive mathematical theorem ("Hilfs-princip"). Dr. Elsas shows conclusively that this principle is unnecessary, and that its agreement with fact in the application of it made by Fechner must be regarded as accidental. Again, Fechner's deductions start with the assumption that sensations can be summated; this the author refuses to accept, and points to the sensations of tone intervals, in which the summation does not give the effect of the resulting interval, but it requires the product to do so. Once more, the "relational hypothesis," as Fechner terms his exposition of the law, is only one of a number of possible hypotheses that fit the facts quite as well as does Fechner's, and the decisive ground of choice between them depends on considerations of naturalness which Fechner hardly touches upon. Fechner sees in the fact that his formulae take into account the existence of the threshold a valuable proof of their validity; Dr. Elsas shows that other formulae have the same merit, and that the threshold is made mechanically necessary by the physiological adaptations of the organism. In fine, the author holds that Fechner's mathematical deductions are irrelevant, that they lead to a false view of the entire field of psychophysics, and that they neglect to consider the natural, physiological import of the facts which it is the aim of that science to coordinate and systematize.

J. J.

Die Willenshandlung: ein Beitrag zur physiologischen Psychologie. HUGO MÜNSTERBERG. Freiburg, I. B., 1888, 163 pp.

In his preface the author tells us that his first plan in writing a work on the Will was to prepare a general treatise, setting forth in the first part the physiology and pathology of the neuro-muscular system, whose function it is to conduct voluntary movements; in the second, to present the psychology of the will and make connec-